# HISTORIAN

www.hancockcountyhistoricalsociety.com

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

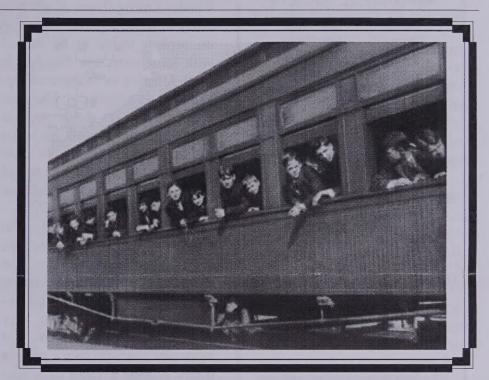
**July 2008** 

## COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The July luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, July 17, 2008, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The speaker will be Phillip Remel, a local arborist who received a grant to catalogue our county's many ancient trees. Reservations are required and may be made by calling 467-4090. Please call by noon on Wednesday, July 16, to assure your reservation and to help us plan seating which is limited to forty-five people. The price of the lunch is \$8.00.

### President's Message

As we are now well into summer, it's time to start planning for our annual Halloween Cemetery Tour. This popular event is warmly anticipated by our community, and attendance continues to increase each year. The event, however, requires a sizable amount of planning, setting-up and, of course, performing. We need volunteers for all aspects of this fun affair. Please consider participating. You will help create fun memories for yourself and many others. If you'd like to volunteer, give the Society a call at 467-4090.



One of the many orphan trains traveling west from New York City carrying children to new homes in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries

## THE ORPHAN TRAIN MOVEMENT

Edited by Eddie Coleman

After the Civil War one of the most gripping of New York City's social problems was the abandonment of infants in the streets of the city. By 1869, it was no longer an item of news or even of interest to find an abandoned infant on the doorsteps of a rich family, in the hallway of a tenement, or at the

entrance to a convent. St. Peter's Convent on Barclay Street was a favorite refuge of distraught mothers, and very often the Sisters on opening their door in the morning would find an infant deposited on the doorstep.

In 1869 Sister Mary Irene of St. Peter's Convent took the matter of abandoned children to Mother Mary Jerome, the Superior of the Sisters of Charity. The Mother Superior presented the matter to Archbishop McCloskey who encouraged the Sisters to provide for the care of abandoned

(Continued on p. 4)

THE

### **HISTORIAN**

OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Eddie Coleman, Editor Linda-Lou Nelson, Publisher

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#### LOBRANO HOUSE HOURS

MONDAY — FRIDAY 10:00AM — 3:00PM Closed: 12:00—1:00 (lunch)

#### MISSION STATEMENT

"TO PRESERVE THE GENERAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF HANCOCK COUNTY AND TO PRESERVE THE KATE LOBRANO HOUSE AND COLLECTIONS THEREIN; TO RESEARCH AND INTERPRET LIFE IN HANCOCK COUNTY; AND TO ENCOURAGE AN APPRECIATION OF AND INTEREST IN HISTORICAL PRESERVATION."

children. As a result, the New York Foundling Hospital, operated by the Sisters of Charity, opened in January 1870.

In 1873 the Sisters of the New York Foundling Hospital joined with the Children's Aid Society, founded and directed by Charles Loring Brace, in sending many of these orphans westward on orphan trains to be placed with farm and other families in rural America as indentured servants or as adoptees. The idea was that families would provide the children food, clothing, and a living space in return for their help on the farms. It was hoped that the children would become an integral part of the families.

To find homes for the children, priests along the rail routes were notified that the Foundling Hospital had children who needed homes. Parishioners made requests, often very specific, for these children. For example, prospective parents might request a child of a specific sex, hair and eye color, and complexion. The hospital made every effort to honor these requests so that the child would "fit in" more readily with the chosen family.

An "indenture" form was used to place the children. It was a legal document that gave the Sisters of the Foundling Hospital legal recourse without going to court in case the child needed to be removed.

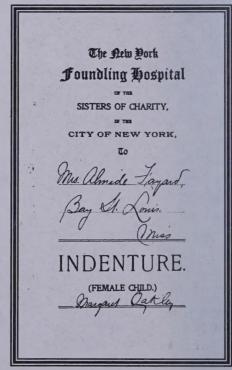
At least two of these trains made stops in Bay Saint Louis in 1909 and in 1910. Among the orphans brought here were Margaret Oakley Fayard Cuevas, John Korcinsky Law-

rence Damborino, Annie Richtner Adams Graham, and Thomas Mitchell Luc

#### MARGARET OAKLEY FAYARD CUEVAS

Margaret Oakley Fayard Cuevas was born on June 5, 1908, in New York City. She traveled to Bay Saint Louis from the New York Foundling Home aboard one of the orphan trains in September 1910 and was indentured to Mrs. Almieda Fayard on September 14, 1910. Unfortunately, Mrs. Fayard died in 1914, but the child was reared by Mrs. Fayard's son, Freddy, and his wife, Sidonia.

Margaret Fayard attended school in Bay Saint Louis and married Monroe Frank Cuevas on June 25, 1932. They had seven children: Monroe, Jr., Milton, Rose Marie, Donald, Anthony, Irvin, and Vincent.



A picture of the first page of the contract signed between the Sisters of Charity and the adoptive parents



These children are waiting to board the orphan train. Notice the placard hanging around each child's neck. The number written there matched the child to the adoptive parents.

#### JOHN KORCINSKY LAWRENCE DAMBORINO

John Korcinsky Damborino was born in New York City on December 10, 1906, to Annie and Michael Korcinsky, Polish immigrants who returned to Poland. He was admitted by the Sisters of Charity to the New York Foundling home on January 2, 1907.

Mr. Damborino was one of the first groups of orphan children placed by the Sisters of charity in Bay Saint Louis. He was adopted by Alex Damborino and his wife, Lena, on March 12, 1910, at the age of three. He attended Ripp's University and St. Stanislaus College and was confirmed at Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church. [Ripp's University was a free night school operated by St. Stanislaus in the early 20th Century.] On June 18, 1927, he married Margaret Heitzmann of Bay Saint Louis at Our Lady of the Gulf.

For twenty-eight years he worked for the *Sea Coast Echo* and then started his own newspaper, the *Hancock County Eagle*. He remained the owner/editor of

this weekly paper for about twenty years before selling it to the *Echo*.

When he was a teen, he suspected he was adopted and asked his mother about it. She firmly said, "No," and then proceeded to burn his adoption pa-Admitting having an adopted child was not a socially accepted thing to do in the early 1900's. However, he continued to wonder about his adoption until he was grown. He wrote and visited the sisters of Charity in New York, and with their help secured a birth certificate from the Bureau of Records. Department of Health, New York City. Other than his parents' names as listed on the birth certificate, he was unable to learn anything more definite than that his parents had probably returned to Poland. Damborino died on December 10, 1987, and is buried in Cedar Rest Cemetery.

#### ANNIE RICHTNER ADAM GRAHAM

Annie Richtner Adam Graham was born on December 9, 1906, in New York City to a German father and an Austrian mother. She was twenty-one months old when she arrived in Bay Saint Louis and was indentured to and adopted by John Sherry Adam and his wife, Mary Bourgeois Adam. Also on the train with her were Louis Roberts and William Adam, the latter of whom was adopted by John Sherry Adam's brother, Tom. Little Annie had the number "205" sewn onto her underwear. and that was the number her adoptive family had been given to match. Years later when her husband chose a box at the post office, he chose #205.

Mrs. Graham attended public school in Bay Saint Louis. Since her family spoke French, she learned French, and luckily her first grade teacher taught in French. She was in the second or third grade before she learned English. She attended school until the eighth grade and then went to work in the Peerless Seafood Factory.

In 1924 Mrs. Graham went to work for the Bell Telephone Co., located at that time in the old *Echo* building on the Beach. She worked for Bell for thirty-two years as a junior and senior operator and as assistant chief supervisor. She knew many citizens of Bay Saint Louis only as customers of Bell. When she left Bell Telephone, she was assistant supervisor of twenty-three operators.

On July 4, 1931, she married William Bryan Graham.

VOLUNTEER TO HELP WITH THE ANNUAL HALLOWEEN TOUR! They had no children.

### THOMAS MITCHELL LUC

Thomas Mitchell Luc was born in 1907, but the actual date and place (probably New York City) are unknown. He arrived by train in Bay Saint Louis and was adopted by Victor Luc and his wife Katie Damborino Luc. Mrs. Luc's brother, Alex Damborino, also adopted a son from the same train (John Damborino).

As happens so many times, after the Lucs adopted their son, they had natural-born children-eight in fact! Thomas Luc was well along in his teens before he suspected he was adopted; however, he never told anyone that he was adopted. His oldest sister said that she knew it because she had heard her mother "talking to that man about it." [This man was probably an agent for the Sisters of Charity checking on adoptees.] Mr. Luc had little reason to doubt that he was a natural-born son because he and his brother, Laurence, looked alike. He was treated like all the other children, and they never think of him as "adopted." As a matter of fact, his parents and relatives of their generation are the only ones who know for sure whether he was adopted or not.

He attended elementary school at Ripp's, and after grade school he went to work at LeBlanc Grocery Store where he learned to be a butcher. He ran the butcher shops in several stores in Bay Saint Louis and moved on to New Orleans. He first married Catherine Pagano and had two children. He later married Marie

Carver Necaise and had one child. He died on May 28, 1968, and is buried in Garden of Memories in Bay Saint Louis.

EDITOR'S NOTE: More information about the orphan trains is available in the vertical files at the Hancock County Historical Society.

#### SOURCES:

Hilliker, Meg. Interviews with descendents of local train riders.
September 1989. Hancock
County Historical Society
vertical files.

"The New York Foundling Hospital."

National Orphan Train. June
26, 2008 25 pars. <www. Or
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"The Orphan Trains." *American Ex perience*. June 26, 2008 11 pars. <www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/orphan>.

President's Message (Continued from p. 1)

Our newly landscaped yard has greatly enhanced the Lobrano property. We still, however, have some space for some additional planting. If you'd like to donate a plant, preferably one that doesn't require constant care, the Society is very interested. Hanging baskets are welcome also as the porch already has hooks for such.

Those of you who've visited the Society recently are aware that Cue Street remains closed to traffic. We regret this inconvenience as it makes access and parking difficult particularly for our monthly luncheons. The city advises that it is waiting on additional FEMA funding to complete the paying of the

street. Like you, we hope this funding comes through soon. In the meantime please be aware of the street closure and plan accordingly. There is usually parking available on Main and Second Streets.

Hope to see you at our luncheon on July 17. Remember, reservations are required.

Scott Bagley

### BOOKS FOR SALE AT LOBRANO HOUSE

Bay Saint Louis: Celebrating the First 300 Years
By the HCHS (\$15.00)
A nostalgic keepsake of the city's history including descriptions and pictures of many of the historic buildings and houses especially those along
Beach Boulevard prior to Katrina

Heritage Cookbook
By the HCHS (\$15.00)
A collection of our members' favorite family recipes

Holly
By Paul La Violette (\$20.00)
An intriguing anthology of tales of a tomcat living in a beach house on the Gulf Coast

Katrina Cookbook

By Charlet Russell (\$19.95)

A collection of recipes by Bayou Tours

Mississippi's No-Man's Land
By Marco Giardino, Ph.D., and Russell Guerin
(\$10.95)

The story of the Koch family, early settlers of Hancock County, and their experiences during the Civil War, based on their letters

One Dog, Two Dogs, Three Dogs, Four...

By Paul La Violette (\$20.00)

Twice told tales of several dogs living in a beach house on the Gulf Coast

Sink or Be Sunk
By Paul La Violette (\$30.00)
A recounting of the naval battle in the Mississippi
Sound preceding the Battle of New Orleans in
1812

A White Egret in the Shallows
By Paul La Violette (\$20.00)
"His stories reveal the ambiance and wonder of coastal living, while at the same time showing the sometimes slow, sometimes catastrophic physical and social changes taking place in the coastal regions."

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## Historian editorial by Charles H. Gray Executive Director Hancock County Historical Society Former Chairman of the Preservation Ordinance Commission

#### REQUIEM FOR A BUILDING

There were so many moments of panic when we returned to the Bay after Katrina. At every intersection there were unrecognizable piles of debris where homes had been. But every now and then there was a building, or at least a part of one, that gave flashes of hope or caused a warm rush of familiarity.



Hancock Bank stood, white and strong, defining the corner of Main Street and Beach Boulevard. True, the damage was enormous, but the building stood, proud among the ruins. Today it is more magnificent than ever: the scars that remain are but badges of valor.

As we proceeded down Main Street, there was the Hancock Bank addition, formerly the Bay Saint Louis Post Office; the Hancock Insurance Company; the bank parking lot; Maggie Mae's, which was loved for years as Stevenson and later as Serenity Books; and Déja Vu Voo, formerly the Manieri sisters' home; the parking lot where the old Bourgeois home stood before it was moved to Saint Charles Street; the Bungalow, now Twin Lights; and finally, the Bobby Anne Bakery at 138 Main.

The roof was damaged, and the lower section of an upstairs window was blown out, as were the outer plate glass windows on the ground floor. But the building had stood against enormous odds. The violent winds with incredible velocity had been unable to bring it down. It had endured the worst assault in its 125 year history. Still, the worst was yet to come.

It was built in 1880, a large, square, two-story building, originally designed as a bakery on the ground floor with living accommodations upstairs for the family. There was a partitioned glass bay-window and a shop entrance on the left side and a recessed entrance to the residence on the right side. These features are clearly visible on the Sanborn maps of 1893, 1897, and 1930. Also there are numerous photographs of it that were made while the Post Office was being built across the street in 1935. The Sanborn Maps even record the "ovens" and the "baking room" in updates through 1960. I do not have the date the Jacobi family closed the bakery, but it was advertised in the *Bay St. Louis Mississippi 100 Years* published in 1958 and in the phone books of the period.

Sometime in the decade following World War II, the façade was altered and plate glass windows replaced the baywindow, the door, and the porch. The perimeter of the ground floor surface was cloaked in Carrara glass, and the family entrance was moved to the interior of the building.

Forget the memories of the smell of hot bread baking in the ovens or the incredible pastries that filled the glass cases for half a century. They could not endure in the stink of fresh greed in the market.

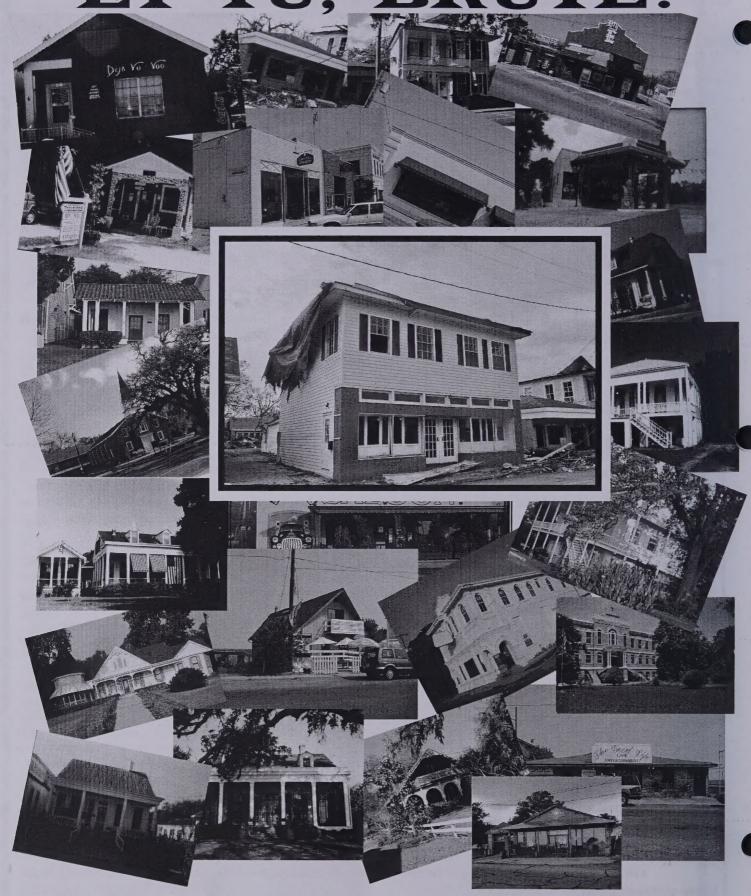
Outside "investors" dismantled the infrastructure: the walls, the cross-partitions and sills, the floors and beams, the windows These clandestine, illegal, and insidious attacks quietly continued over two and a half years until, when they finally applied for a demolition permit, there was little left for preservationists to defend. The final assault was spraying at it with offensive red paint to further reduce its acceptance to the community.

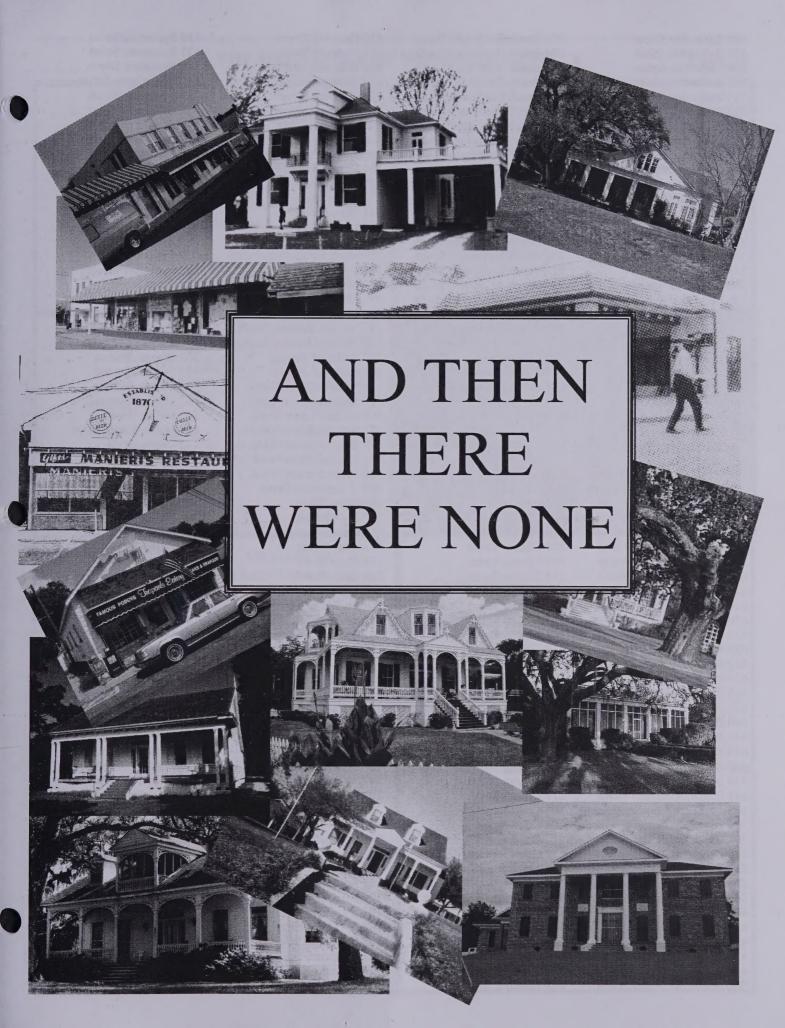
In the end, it was not the furor of the storm but the avarice of the owners that brought the Bobby Anne Bakery to the ground. The asking price of "a million—two" will assure that Main Street will have a vacant lot on the site for many years to come, and judging by the total lack of maintenance during the past two-and-a-half years since Katrina, we expect nothing less than more trash. Whether it was "Demolition by Neglect" or by "Intent" this was a wanton waste of a valuable asset. In spite of protests by the Historical Society, the Department of Archives and History, adjacent property owners, the Main Street Association, and a preservation ordinance which clearly prohibits demolition by neglect or demolition without proving economic hardship, the doomsday permit was approved by the Preservation Ordinance Commission with only two dissenting votes. A treasure was lost, and one new blight was created on Main Street!

The natural beauty of the Bay of Saint Louis inspired the building of beautiful buildings along its shores. For 308 years residents built their personal "castles," both large and small, near the calming waters, thus creating a magnificent city which was the envy of all others less fortunate. However, beauty is frequently fragile, and man has seldom built structures stronger than the triple tantrums of Nature—fire, wind and water.

On the following pages are some of the treasures from the Beach Boulevard Historic District of the National Register of Historic Places which we have lost.

ET TU. BRUTE?





105 D 11 - 1 - C	500 D 1 D 1 10 1	C10 II 1 C1	110 C Ctmoot
105 Ballentine Street	502 Beach Boulevard South	610 Hancock Street	119 Sycamore Street
107 Ballentine Street	504 Beach Boulevard South	611 Hancock Street	123 Sycamore Street
109 Ballentine Street	506 Beach Boulevard South	612 Hancock Street	128 Sycamore Street
111 Ballentine Street	600 Beach Boulevard South	614 Hancock Street	128½ Sycamore Street
113 Ballentine Street	604 Beach Boulevard South	704 Hancock Street	133 Sycamore Street
123 Ballentine Street	608 Beach Boulevard South	707 Hancock Street	208 Sycamore Street
126 Ballentine Street	610 Beach Boulevard South	708 Hancock Street	210 Sycamore Street
206 Ballentine Street	612 Beach Boulevard South	710 Hancock Street	212 Sycamore Street
	700 Beach Boulevard South	130 Keller Street	
207 Ballentine Street			227 Sycamore Street
208 Ballentine Street	708 Beach Boulevard South	131 Keller Street	228 Sycamore Street
209 Ballentine Street	710 Beach Boulevard South	128 Main Street	248 Sycamore Street
210 Ballentine Street	712 Beach Boulevard South	132 Main Street	249 Sycamore Street
212 Ballentine Street	800 Beach Boulevard South	141 Main Street	250 Sycamore Street
214 Ballentine Street	806 Beach Boulevard South	142 Main Street	500 Sycamore Street
215 Ballentine Street	904 Beach Boulevard South	151 Main Street	501 Sycamore Street
216 Ballentine Street	908 Beach Boulevard South	159 Main Street	509 Sycamore Street
217 Ballentine Street	912 Beach Boulevard South	209½ Main Street	531 Sycamore Street
218 Ballentine Street	916 Beach Boulevard South	319 Main Street	417 Third Street
	918 Beach Boulevard South		
220 Ballentine Street		353 Main Street	300 Toulme Street South
222 Ballentine Street	920 Beach Boulevard South	117 McDonald Lane	304 Toulme Street South
223 Ballentine Street	940 Beach Boulevard South	203 Necaise Avenue South	425 Toulme Street South
225 Ballentine Street	942 Beach Boulevard South	309 Necaise Avenue South	205½ Ulman Avenue
227 Ballentine Street	300 Blaize Avenue	303 Railroad Avenue	302 Ulman Avenue
229 Ballentine Street	308 Blaize Avenue	401 Railroad Avenue	303 Ulman Avenue
231 Ballentine Street	101 Bookter Street	110 Second Street North	306 Ulman Avenue
234 Ballentine Street	114 Bookter Street	112 Second Street North	307 Ulman Avenue
	116 Bookter Street	307 Second Street North	111 Union Street
235 Ballentine Street			
241 Ballentine Street	118 Bookter Street	321 Second Street North	115 Union Street
246 Ballentine Street	120 Bookter Street	323 Second Street North	117 Union Street
248 Ballentine Street	220 Bookter Street	101 Second Street South	122 Union Street
100 Beach Boulevard North	1 Breath Lane	308 Second Street South	205 Union Street
104-8 Beach Boulevard North	2 Breath Lane	199 5 Seminary Drive	211 Union Street
116 Beach Boulevard North	7 Breath Lane	105 State Street	300 Union Street
118 Beach Boulevard North	310 Carroll Avenue	107 State Street	301 Union Street
208 Beach Boulevard North	323 Carroll Avenue	124 State Street	304 Union Street
220 Beach Boulevard North	104 Citizen Street	133 State Street	306 Union Street
502 Beach Boulevard North	107 Citizen Street	136 State Street	311 Union Street
610 Beach Boulevard North	110 Citizen Street	306 State Street	101 Washington Street
612 Beach Boulevard North	111 Citizen Street	355 State Street	104 Washington Street
614 Beach Boulevard North	113 Citizen Street	103 StCharles Street	105 Washington Street
616 Beach Boulevard North	115 Citizen Street	105 StCharles Street	107 Washington Street
618 Beach Boulevard North	117 Citizen Street	107 StCharles Street	108 Washington Street
630 Beach Boulevard North	119 Citizen Street	109 StCharles Street	110 Washington Street
632 Beach Boulevard North	120 Citizen Street	111 StCharles Street	113 Washington Street
634 Beach Boulevard North	121 Citizen Street	115 StCharles Street	114 Washington Street
	203 Citizen Street	117 StCharles Street	
636 Beach Boulevard North			116 Washington Street
638 Beach Boulevard North	205 Citizen Street	121 StCharles Street	118 Washington Street
640 Beach Boulevard North	208 Citizen Street	129 StCharles Street	120 Washington Street
642 Beach Boulevard North	209 Citizen Street	133 StCharles Street	123 Washington Street
646 Beach Boulevard North	212 Citizen Street	135 StCharles Street	124 Washington Street
647 Beach Boulevard North	215 Citizen Street	137 StCharles Street	125 Washington Street
648 Beach Boulevard North	217 Citizen Street	147 StCharles Street	127 Washington Street
651 Beach Boulevard North	219 Citizen Street	202 StCharles Street	128 Washington Street
108-10 Beach Boulevard South	107 Court Street	203 StCharles Street	131 Washington Street
200 Beach Boulevard South	108 Court Street	315 StGeorge Street	200 Washington Street
205 Beach Boulevard South	110 Court Street	306 StJohn Street	201 Washington Street
210 Beach Boulevard South	132 Court Street	323 StJohn Street	204 Washington Street
222 Beach Boulevard South	318 Easterbrook Street	101 Sycamore Street	208 Washington Street
228_2 Beach Boulevard South	324 Easterbrook Street	102 Sycamore Street	218 Washington Street
240 Beach Boulevard South	332 Easterbrook Street	103 Sycamore Street	228 Washington Street
406 Beach Boulevard South	347 Easterbrook Street	105 Sycamore Street	238 Washington Street
412 Beach Boulevard South	348 Easterbrook Street	106 Sycamore Street	410 Washington Street
414 Beach Boulevard South	207 Easy Street	108 Sycamore Street	429 Washington Street
416 Beach Boulevard South	400 Hancock Street	111 Sycamore Street	436 Washington Street
418 Beach Boulevard South	401 Hancock Street		500 Washington Street
		116 Sycamore Street	
500 Beach Boulevard South	609 Hancock Street	118 Sycamore Street	And many more

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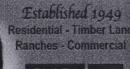
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### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Saturday, July 12, 2008
Ralph Brennan signs his book,
Ralph Brennan's New Orleans Seafood
Cookbook,
and offers tasty tidbits prepared
from the book's recipes.
5:00 to 7:00 P. M.

Ken Murphy signs
My South Coast Home and Mississippi
and new prints from his collection.
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